

Phase Two Guidance

Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19): Guidance for Travel

During Phase Two, non-essential travel outside of the National Capital Region remains discouraged. As travel increases your chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19, staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick.

On July 24, 2020, Mayor Bowser issued [Mayor's Order 2020-081](#), requiring persons to self-quarantine after non-essential travel from high-risk areas within the prior 14 days during the public health emergency. Pursuant to the Order, "essential travel" is defined by Mayor's Order 2020-054, dated March 30, 2020 and subsequent interpretative guidance, and in addition, includes travel to or through the District for any reason that lasts less than twenty-four (24) hours.

Travel to and from Maryland and Virginia is exempt from the Order and persons traveling through a "high-risk" area, such as through an airport or by car, are not subject to the quarantine requirement. In accordance with Mayor's Order 2020-054, dated March 30, 2020, "essential travel" is:

- Travel related to the provision of, or access to, Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, Essential Businesses, or Minimum Basic Operations, including travel to and from work to operate Essential Businesses or maintain Essential Governmental Functions;
- Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons;
- Travel required to visit a house of worship;
- Travel to or from educational institutions for purposes of receiving materials for distance learning, for receiving meals, and any other related services;
- For those commuting to and from the District for essential activities, travel for residents to return to a place of residence in Washington, DC and for non-residents to return to their place of residence outside Washington, DC;
- Travel required by law enforcement or court order; and
- Travel within the National Capital Region.
- Examples of non-essential travel include vacations, school trips, youth sports tournaments or work conferences.

Prior to traveling, it is important to determine whether the risks to yourself and others for travel outside of the District, Maryland and Virginia outweigh the benefit of that travel at this time. Do not travel if you are sick, or if you have been around someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days, and do not travel with someone who is sick.

- For a list of "high-risk" states where non-essential travel from the National Capital Region is not recommended, see coronavirus.dc.gov/phasetwo.
- If you choose to travel to one of the "high-risk" states on this list for **non-essential purposes, you must quarantine for 14 days** upon return home to the National Capital Region.
- Travelers should quarantine based on the current list of high-risk states listed on the website the day they arrive in the District.
- If you are traveling for **essential purposes**, such as the ones listed above, you must still self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and limit your activities involving contact with

other persons for fourteen (14) days to only those essential purposes. If you show a symptom of COVID-19, self-quarantine and seek medical advice or testing.

- While travel to and from Maryland and Virginia is exempt, carefully consider non-essential travel to regions and vacation destinations in those states which may be higher risk than other areas of the states.

Please note that any individual experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or recently exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19, should not travel due to the risk of exposing others.

Symptoms of COVID-19 may include: fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or otherwise feeling unwell.

Consider the following when contemplating travel:

- If COVID-19 is spreading where you are going, you can get infected while traveling and spread it to members of your household when you return.
- If COVID-19 is still spreading in your community, you can potentially spread the virus to others while traveling, even if you don't have symptoms.
- Older adults or people with underlying health conditions are **at an increased risk for complications** from COVID-19 and should be cautious.

Certain increased risks are associated with various travel methods:

- Air travel: Air travel requires spending time in security lines and airport terminals, which can bring you in close contact with other people and frequently touched surfaces. Also, social distancing is difficult on crowded flights, and you may have to sit near others (within 6 feet), sometimes for hours, increasing risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Bus or train travel: Traveling on buses or trains for any length of time can involve sitting or standing within 6 feet of others.
- Car travel: Making stops along the way for gas, food, or bathroom breaks can put you and your traveling companions in close contact with other people and as well as into contact with potentially contaminated surfaces.
- Cruise ships: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) currently recommends that travelers defer all cruise travel worldwide.

Anticipate travel needs to decrease exposures:

- Bring enough medicine for the entire trip.
- Pack enough alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and keep it with you.
- Bring a cloth face covering to wear in public places, including outdoor areas where it is difficult to maintain social distancing.
- Prepare food and water for your trip. Pack non-perishable food in case restaurants and stores are closed.
- If you clean your travel lodgings, see the CDC's guidance on cleaning and disinfection [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html#clean-disinfect](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html#clean-disinfect).

Follow state and local travel restrictions:

- For up-to-date information and travel guidance, check the state or local health department where you are, along your route, and at your planned destination. A list of

state and territorial health department websites can be found on the CDC website:
cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html.

- While you are traveling, it is possible a state or local government may put into place travel restrictions, such as stay-at-home or shelter-in-place orders, mandated quarantines upon arrival, or even state border closures. Check for updates as you travel.

For international travel, be aware of travel restrictions that may be in place prohibiting non-residents from entering or requiring self-isolation for visitors.

- A 14-day self-quarantine starting from the date you return home after any international travel is recommended.
- Restrictions for visitors change frequently. It is important to know what restrictions are in place before planning and departing for international destinations.
- Note that if you do travel abroad, there is no guarantee you will be able to return due to potential for changing travel restrictions and interruptions.
- For country-specific travel health information, please consult the CDC Travel Health Notices webpage at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices.

If you have traveled to a high-risk area and need to quarantine for 14 days from the time you returned home, take the following precautions:

- Avoid leaving your home as much as possible (for example, don't leave home to go to work or school).
- Separate yourself from others (6 feet) who did not travel, including in your home.
- Monitor yourself for symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Check your temperature with a thermometer two times a day and monitor for fever. Also watch for cough, trouble breathing, and other possible symptoms of COVID-19. Use a temperature log to document your temperature.
- Do not have any visitors in your home.
- Avoid public activities.
- For more information on quarantining see "Guidance for Contacts of a Person Confirmed to Have COVID-19" at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.
- **Taking a COVID-19 test within this 14 day period is not a substitute for quarantining and will not exempt you from this requirement.**

If you develop symptoms, then

- Consult with your healthcare provider. Call ahead and let them know your symptoms.
- Call 911 if you have a medical emergency such as difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, or inability to arouse, bluish lips or face.
- If you need a COVID-19 test, information on options for COVID-19 testing are available at coronavirus.dc.gov/testing.

These recommendations will continue to be updated. Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov regularly for the most current information.